Attorney Docket No.: 5577-115CX

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re: Nguyen et al.
Serial No.: 09/207,945
Filed: December 9, 1998
For: SYSTEMS, METHODS AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCTS FOR ASSOCIATING DYNAMICALLY GENERATED WEB PAGE CONTENT WITH WEB SITE VISITORS

Group: 2178
Examiner: T. Huynh

Date: December 8, 2003

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TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF
(PATENT APPLICATION--37 C.F.R. § 1.192)

1. Transmitted herewith, in triplicate, is the APPEAL BRIEF in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on October 8, 2003.

2. This application is filed on behalf of
   ☐ a small entity
   A verified statement ☐ is attached; ☐ was already filed.

3. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c), the fee for filing the Appeal Brief is:
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Attorney's Docket No. 5577-115.CX

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Group: 2178
Confirmation No.: 7467
Examiner: T. Huynh

December 8, 2003

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APPELLANTS' BRIEF ON APPEAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.192

Sir:

This Appeal Brief is filed pursuant to the *Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences* filed October 8, 2003.

Real Party In Interest

The real party in interest is assignee International Business Machines Corporation, Armonk, New York.

Related Appeals

Appellants are aware of no appeals or interferences that would be affected by the present appeal.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19-23, 25-32, 34-36, 38-42, 44-51, 53-55 and 57 remain pending. Each of these claims currently stands finally rejected. Appellants appeal the final rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19-23, 25-32, 34-36, 38-42, 44-51, 53-55 and 57. The attached Appendix A presents the claims at issue as finally rejected in the Official Action of July 9, 2003 and the Advisory Action of September 23, 2003.

State of Amendments

The attached Appendix A presents the claims as they currently stand. Each of the claims remains as filed or as amended in the Preliminary Amendment dated February 25,

2003 and filed with the present continuation application. All amendments have been entered in the present case.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention provides methods, systems and computer program products that may be used to collect information about the preferences of Web site visitors and/or to facilitate delivering personalized content to those Web site visitors in response to requests for Web pages. (Application at 4). Pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, a user requests a Web page from a Web server. The Web server dynamically generates the requested Web page using a template and one or more content objects, and stores a record of the request within a Web server log. The generated Web page is then served to the Web client, and a unique identifier that is associated with each content object that is used is appended to the stored user request record.

Each time a user requests additional content, the respective identifiers associated with the requested content object(s) may be appended to the respective user request record. The user request record may further include time stamps that may be used to determine the amount of time a user spends viewing particular content. The stored records of user requests can be analyzed to determine user preferences with respect to Web page content. The choices of Web pages requested by the user, combined with information about what content was presented on each requested Web page and the amount of time spent viewing that content, can provide insight into the preferences of a user. The efficacy of certain content within a viewed Web page can also be determined, for example, by identifying content that was ignored by users (*e.g.*, hyperlinks that are not selected by the user).

Issue

Are Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19-23, 25-32, 34-36, 38-42, 44-51, 53-55 and 57 properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,999,912 ("Wodarz") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,974,455 ("Monier"), U.S. Patent No. 6,108,637 ("Blumenau") and U.S. Patent No. 6,311,211 ("Shaw")?

Grouping of Claims

Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19-23, 25-32, 34-36, 38-42, 44-51, 53-55 and 57 stand rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. For the purposes of this appeal, Appellants

submit that Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 13, 15-17, 20-23, 26, 28-30, 32, 34-36, 39-42, 45, 47-49, 51, 53-55 may be considered as standing or falling together (Group I), Claims 6, 12, 19, 25, 31, 38, 44, 50, 57 may be considered as standing or falling together (Group II), and Claims 8, 27, 46 may be considered as standing or falling together (Group III). Appellants submit that the above-listed groups of claims are separately patentable for the reasons discussed below.

Argument

I. Introduction

Each of the claims of the present application stands rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. A determination under Section 103 that an invention would have been obvious to someone of ordinary skill in the art is a conclusion of law based on fact. *Panduit Corp. v. Dennison Mfg. Co.* 810 F.2d 1593, 1 U.S.P.Q.2d 1593 (Fed. Cir. 1987), *cert. denied*, 107 S.Ct. 2187. After the involved facts are determined, the decision maker must then make the legal determination of whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was unknown, and just before it was made. *Id.* at 1596. The United States Patent and Trademark Office has the initial burden under Section 103 to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the prior art references cited in the rejection, when combined, must teach or suggest *all* the recitations of the claims, and there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the reference teachings in the manner suggested. M.P.E.P. § 2143. The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. M.P.E.P. § 2143.01, citing *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 U.S.P.Q.2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990). As emphasized by the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, to support combining references, evidence of a suggestion, teaching, or motivation to combine must be clear and particular, and this requirement for clear and particular evidence is not met by broad and conclusory statements about the teachings of references. *In re Dembiczak*, 50 U.S.P.Q.2d 1614, 1617 (Fed. Cir. 1999). Thus, in support of a Section 103 rejection, particular evidence from the prior art must be provided showing why a skilled artisan, with no knowledge of the claimed invention, would have combined the cited

references in the manner claimed in the rejection. *In re Kotzab*, 55 U.S.P.Q.2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000).

Furthermore, as recently stated by the Federal Circuit with regard to the selection and combination of references:

> This factual question of motivation is material to patentability, and could not be resolved on subjective belief and unknown authority. It is improper, in determining whether a person of ordinary skill would have been led to this combination of references, simply to "[use] that which the inventor taught against its teacher." *W.L. Gore v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1553, 220 USPQ 303, 312-13 (Fed. Cir. 1983). Thus the Board must not only assure that the requisite findings are made, based on evidence of record, but must also explain the reasoning by which the findings are deemed to support the agency's conclusion....

In re Sang Su Lee, 277 F.3d 1338, 1343 (Fed. Cir. 2002).

Appellants respectfully submit that the pending claims are patentable over the cited references because the cited combination fails to disclose or suggest all of the recitations of the pending claims, and because the reasoning behind such combination has not been established. The patentability of the pending claims is discussed in detail hereinafter.

II. The Group I Claims are Patentable Over the Cited References

The Group I claims comprise Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 13, 15-17, 20-23, 26, 28-30, 32, 34-36, 39-42, 45, 47-49, 51, 53-55. Each of the Group I claims stands rejected as obvious over the combination of Wodarz, Monier, Blumenau and Shaw. (Final Action at ¶ 4, pp. 2-14). These claims are directed to methods, systems and computer program products for "associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server." (*See, e.g.*, Application at Claim 1). For the reasons discussed below, Appellants respectfully submit that the Group I claims are patentable over the cited art.

A. The Cited Art Does Not Teach Appending the Unique Identifier for a Content Object to the Stored Record of a User Request

Group I Claims 1-4, 7, 13, 15-17, 20-23, 26, 32, 34-36, 39-42, 45, 51 and 53-55 each include the recitation of "appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page." The remaining Group I claims (Claims 9-11, 28-30 and 47-49) each include the similar recitation of "appending the stored record of the user request with the first and second unique identifiers

associated with the first and second content objects included within the generated Web page." The Final Office Action cites to the **combination** of Blumenau and Shaw as teaching each the above-quoted recitations. (*See, e.g.*, Final Office Action at 3-4, citing to Blumenau, Col. 2, lines 20-52 and Shaw, Col. 4, lines 40-58 and Col. 11, lines 56-57). The cited references, however, simply do not teach what the Final Office Action claims.

The cited portion of Blumenau discusses a system for monitoring requests for content over the World Wide Web. (Blumenau at Col. 1, line 66 to Col. 2, line 1). Upon receiving a request from a client computer for a Web page, a Web server transfers a file to the client that represents the Web page. (Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 20-22). The file that is transferred may itself reference other files, where the other files can be stored at the Web server or on another computer. (Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 24-27). The Web server also maintains a log file that includes a separate record of each file requested. (Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 31-33). The log file may record both the IP address of the client computer that requested the file and "an identification of the file requested." (Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 42-44). In cases where a request for a Web page results in the transfer of multiple files from the Web server to the client computer, **a separate entry is recorded in the log file for each file that was transferred**. (Blumenau at Col. 2, line 63 to Col. 3, line 3).

In contrast to the system of Blumenau, each of the Group I claims recites that one or more unique identifiers are **appended to a "stored record of the user request**." The "user request" referred to in the Group I claims is a request for a Web page. Thus, in the embodiments of the present invention set forth in the Group I claims, the unique identifiers that are associated with the content objects **are appended to the record in the log file of the users original request for a Web page**. Blumenau discusses a very different system in which an entry is recorded in a log file at the Web server of the original request for a Web page. In some instances, the file transferred in response to the request may "itself reference other files", where it is these "other files" that the Final Office Action characterizes as "content objects." (*See* Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 24-28; Final Office Action at 3-4). However, Blumenau expressly states that **a separate entry** is made in the log file for each such "other file" transferred from the Web server. (Blumenau at Col. 2, line 63 to Col. 3, line 3). As such, it is beyond dispute that Blumenau does not append "the unique identifier

associated with the content object" to the "stored record of the user request" as recited in each and every one of the Group I claims.

In fact, Blumenau indicates that, in many instances, **no record whatsoever** will be recorded of the request for the "other files" that the Final Office Action characterizes as comprising the "content objects" referred to in the Group I claims. Specifically, Blumenau expressly notes that these other files "may be stored on the server computer . . . and/or on other server computers." (Blumenau at Col. 2, lines 24-28). Blumenau further explains that only in situations where the "other file" resides on the Web server will the log file be updated to record the transfer of the file. (*See* Blumenau at Col. 2, line 66 to Col. 3, line 1). Thus, not only does the system of Blumenau fail to perform the "appending" step recited in each of the Group I claims; in many instance the Web server of Blumenau makes no record whatsoever of the request for the "other files" that the Final Office Action characterizes as "content objects."

Moreover, Shaw fails to remedy the above-described deficiencies with Blumenau. Shaw discloses a system in which a server uses information in a member profile and/or an event log file to determine which of a group of available advertisements should be directed to a particular user. (*See* Final Office Action at 4, *citing to* Shaw at Col. 4, lines 40-58). Shaw, however, does not teach or suggest that the server **appends** information (*i.e.*, the unique identifier associated with a content object) **to a stored record of a user request** as recited in each of the Group I claims. Instead, in the system of Shaw, the information used to make advertising choices is already stored at the server, and thus there is no need to append information regarding the content that is sent to a previously stored user record.

In summary, neither Blumenau nor Shaw, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest "appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object" as recited in the Group I claims. The system of Blumenau does not append this information as it is interested only in counting the number of times certain content (such as advertisements) is displayed. Shaw does not append this information because Shaw has already compiled information in a member profile that is used to make decisions regarding which advertisements are displayed. Thus, as the cited references fail to teach or suggest this aspect of the Group I claims, the rejections of the Group I claims should be reversed.

B. There is No Motivation to Combine the Cited References

In addition to showing that a cited combination of prior art references teaches all the elements of a claim, to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, it must also be shown that there was some suggestion or motivation, either in the cited references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify and combine the references in the manner suggested in the rejection. MPEP § 2143.01 *citing In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680 (Fed. Cir. 1990). As discussed below, the failure of the Final Office Action to establish any such motivation provides an independent basis for overturning the rejections of the Group I claims.

1. The Office Action Fails To Identify Motivation For Combining Blumenau And Wodarz In The Manner Suggested

As an initial matter, Appellants respectfully submit that the Final Office Action fails to identify proper motivation for combining Blumenau and Wodarz. With respect to this issue, the Final Office Action states:

> It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Shaw, Blumenau into Wodarz and Blumenau to help the server to provide web pages which based on the user specific characteristics as Wodarz disclosed 'selection of ads to provide to the user are based on user specific characteristic' (Wodarz, col. 2, lines 7-13), since storing 'a record of the user request within a web server log' and advertisement identifier associated with the content object included within the generated web page of Shaw and Blumenau would have helped the server keep track of the user's information and activities in order to decide which advertisement suitable to the user.

(Final Office Action at 4; *see also* Final Office Action at 15). The Advisory Office Action mailed on September 23, 2003 also includes the following argument as to why the Examiner believes that an adequate showing has been made of a motivation to combine Blumenau and Wodarz in the manner suggested:

> [B]oth Blumenau and Shaw teach steps to store transactions and information in web log. Shaw further teaches processing web log to make use of the logged information in advertising. On the other hand, Blumenau's discussion clearly relates to display advertisements using user information contained in the log file (Blumenau, col. 1, lines 35-51). A combination of Blumenau and Shaw's log uses into Wodarz col. 2, lines 7-13 is obvious for an ordinary skill in the art at the time to keep track advertisements to provide the user, since user information is recorded in the log file as Blumenau disclosed in col. 1, lines 35-51.

(Advisory Action at 2). While the above-quoted excerpts from both the Final Office Action and the Advisory Office Action are somewhat difficult to understand due to typographical errors, Appellants believe that the Examiner is arguing that since Wodarz states that "user-specific characteristics" may be used to select the advertisements that are provided to a user, a person of skill in the art would have found it obvious to store a record of each user request that included an advertisement identifier within a web server log (as allegedly taught in Blumenau) as this would have helped the server of Wodarz in deciding which advertisement was suitable for the user. Appellants respectfully submit that this argument is both unsupported and inaccurate, and falls far short of the showing required to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

In this regard, it should first be noted that Wodarz is directed to a method for cycling advertisements so that more advertisements may be displayed on a particular web page. While Wodarz does indicate that the advertisements that are to be displayed may be chosen "based upon user-specific characteristics", the types of "user characteristics" Wodarz is discussing are **physical characteristics** of the user "such as age, sex, language, etc." (Wodarz at Col. 3, lines 65-67). Wodarz contains no suggestion whatsoever that the advertisements would be selected based on a stored record of content objects that had previously been requested by the user. Thus, it is clear that the Wodarz reference does not provide the requisite showing of a motivation to combine Wodarz and Blumenau.

The Shaw reference cited by the Examiner likewise fails to provide the requisite motivation to combine the references in the manner suggested. Specifically, Shaw teaches that the "event log file" and "advertisement statistics file" that the Examiner cites to in the pending rejections are used to keep track of statistics regarding the advertisements that the software selected to show to the user and software performance information. (Shaw at Col. 16, lines 12-31). Shaw thus does not store and use information regarding the users selection of content objects for use in deciding what information to display to the user. In fact, Shaw, like Wodarz (*see* Wodarz at Col. 3, lines 65-67), teaches that the advertisements that are provided to the user are selected based on information stored in a member profile as opposed to information regarding the users web-page viewing choices. (*See* Shaw at Col. 4, lines 39-43). Shaw therefore fails to provide any motivation to combine the Wodarz and Blumenau references in the manner suggested.

Finally, Blumenau also fails to provide any motivation to combine the teachings of Blumenau and Wodarz. In fact, the cited portions of Blumenau are taken from the "Background of the Invention " section of Blumenau and describe a prior art system that Blumenau states is "inadequate for a variety of reasons." (Blumenau at Col. 1, lines 52-67). In fact, Blumenau states that the prior art system that is described in the portion of Blumenau cited in the pending rejections may provide misleading information regarding a user's viewing habits, as it will not accurately record the number of times the user views a Web page. (Blumenau at Col. 2, line 62 to Col. 3, line 15). Based on this analysis, Blumenau concludes that "these limitations associated with the content of a log file cannot be overcome by a monitoring approach based on log file analysis." (Blumenau at Col. 4, lines 26-29). It is respectfully submitted that a skilled artisan certainly would not have been motivated to modify Wodarz to include features of a system that Blumenau states would result in such inaccurate and misleading information. Thus, as the Examiner has failed to identify the requisite motivation *in the prior art* for combining Wodarz, Blumenau and Shaw in the manner suggested, the rejections of the Group I claims should be reversed.

2. The Office Action Fails To Identify Motivation For Combining Wodarz And Monier In The Manner Suggested

The Final Office Action likewise fails to identify proper motivation for modifying Wodarz to incorporate the teachings of Monier. With respect to this issue, the Final Office Action states:

> It would have been obvious to a [person] of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Monier and Wodarz to provide an unique identifier for each advertisement using hash function, since the hash function was well known for providing a unique identifier of a piece of data.

(Final Office Action at 3). Appellants respectfully submit that this purported showing of a motivation to combine Wodarz to use the hashing function mentioned in Monier fails for two independent reasons.

First, as discussed above, to support an obviousness rejection it must be shown that **the prior art** provided a motivation to combine the cited references to arrive at the claimed invention. Here, to the extent that the Final Office Action identifies any motivation to combine Wodarz and Monier, that motivation is not based on anything taught by the prior art, but instead is simply a conclusory statement that the skilled artisan would have found it

obvious to do what is taught by the invention. Such evidence of motivation to combine is insufficient as a matter of law to support an obviousness rejection. *See In re Kotzab*, 55 U.S.P.Q.2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000).

Second, a more detailed review of Wodarz and Monier shows that one of skill in the art would be motivated **away** from combining Wodarz and Monier in the manner suggested in the pending rejections. Wodarz is directed to a method for rotating the advertisements that are displayed on a web page. Wodarz thus deals with a situation where there is a relatively small number of items which are stored in a database for insertion into the web page, as directly evidenced by the example set forth in Table 1 of Wodarz, which lists a total of **four** advertisements that have the "unique identifiers" of the letters A-D. Monier, on the other hand, deals with a situation in which an extremely large number of unique identifiers must be generated. In fact, the example included in Monier discusses using a hash function to generate 2^{63} distinct identifiers (as compared to the four unique identifiers required for the example in Wodarz). (*See* Monier at Col. 5, lines 62-64). There is absolutely no indication in Wodarz or Monier or any of the other cited references that the Wodarz invention would be further improved by using a hashing function to generate unique identifiers for these four advertisements. To the contrary, use of a hashing function clearly would not only be unnecessary; it also would be an inefficient use of resources and is exactly the type of modification to Wodarz that a person of skill in the art would be motivated **not** to do. Thus, the failure of the Final Office Action to demonstrate a motivation to combine Wodarz and Monier in the manner suggested provides yet another reason for reversing the rejections of the Group I claims.

III. The Group II Claims are Patentable Over the Cited References

The Group II claims are Claims 6, 12, 19, 25, 31, 38, 44, 50, 57. Each of these claims depend from a Group I claim, and thus are patentable based on the same reasons, discussed above, that the Group I claims are patentable over the cited art. In addition, Appellants respectfully submit that the Group II claims are also patentable over the cited art for at least one additional independent reason.

In particular, each of the Group II claims further recites "analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user." With respect to this recitation, the Final Office Action states that:

> Wodarz also discloses . . . the step of a parser program using algorithms to select appropriate ads (Wodarz, col. 2, lines 7-14), which implies the step of analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine web content preferences of a user.

(Final Office Action at 6). Appellants respectfully submit that no such teaching can be "implied" from Wodarz.

As noted above, Wodarz is directed to a method for cycling advertisements so that more advertisements may be displayed on a particular web page. Nothing in Wodarz even remotely suggests the step of analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine web content preferences of a user. What Wodarz teaches is that the "parser program" selects the advertisements that are to be displayed based on (1) least recently viewed algorithms, (2) random selection, (3) time of day, (4) physical characteristics of the user, or (5) the number of times that the advertisement has previously been displayed within a given time period. (Wodarz at Col. 2, lines 7-14 and Col. 3, line 62 to Col. 4, line 5). Wodarz never mentions or suggests selecting advertisements based on an analysis of the web page content that a user has chosen to previously view, and thus provides no support whatsoever for the Examiner's statement that Wodarz implies analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine web content preferences of a user. Thus, this provides an independent basis for reversing the rejection of the Group II claims.

IV. The Group III Claims are Patentable Over the Cited References

The Group III claims are Claims 8, 27, 46. Each of these claims depend from a Group I claim, and thus are patentable based on the same reasons, discussed above, that the Group I claims are patentable over the cited art. In addition, Appellants respectfully submit that the Group III claims are also patentable over the cited art for at least one additional independent reason.

In particular, each of the Group III claims further recites "determining a length of time the user views the generated Web page using time stamps within the stored record." With respect to this recitation, the Final Office Action states that:

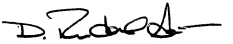
> Blumenau discloses the step of determining a length of time the user views the generated web page using the time stamp within the store record (Blumenau, col. 13, lines 50-58). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined Wodarz and Blumenau to provide more criteria for Wodarz's parser program to select ads to provide to the client, since the server knows what the user's interests are, based on how long the user spent to view the web page.

(Final Office Action at 7). Appellants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to identify any reason that a skilled artisan would have been motivated to modify Wodarz to use time stamps in the manner suggested at Col. 13, lines 50-58 of Blumenau. As noted in the section addressing the rejections of the Group II claims, Wodarz is devoid of any suggestion that stored records reflecting a user's prior viewing habits should be used to select the advertisements that are displayed. Instead, the system of Wodarz selects advertisements based on rotation schemes and/or on a user's physical characteristics. There simply would be no reason to collect and use time stamp information in such a system. This provides yet another reason for reversing the rejections of the Group III claims.

V. Conclusion

In light of the above discussion, Appellants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable over the cited references and, therefore, request reversal of the rejections of Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, 19-23, 25-32, 34-36, 38-42, 44-51, 53-55 and 57.

Respectfully submitted,



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Michele P. McMahan
Date of Signature: December 8, 2003

APPENDIX A
Pending Claims USSN 09/207,945
Filed December 9, 1998

1. (Previously amended): A method of associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with the Web server, the method comprising the following steps performed by the Web server:

storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

2. (Original): A method according to Claim 1 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

3. (Original): A method according to Claim 1 wherein the step of generating the requested Web page comprises the steps of:

retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

retrieving the content object; and

combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

4. (Original): A method according to Claim 3 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

6. (Original): A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

7. (Original): A method according to Claim 1 further comprising the step of appending the stored record of the user request with a time stamp for a subsequent user request for a Web page.

8. (Original): A method according to Claim 7 further comprising the step of determining a length of time the user views the generated Web page using time stamps within the stored record.

9. (Previously amended): A method of associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with the Web server, the method comprising the following steps performed by the Web server:

storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes first and second content objects having respective unique first and second identifiers associated therewith, wherein the unique first and second identifiers are generated via a hashing function, comprising the steps of:

retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

retrieving the first and second content objects; and

combining the first and second content objects and the layout template to produce the requested Web page;

serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

appending the stored record of the user request with the first and second unique identifiers associated with the first and second content objects included within the generated Web page.

10. (Original): A method according to Claim 9 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

11. (Original): A method according to Claim 9 wherein the first and second content objects are selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

12. (Original): A method according to Claim 9 further comprising the step of analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

13. (Previously amended): A method of collecting information about the preferences of Web site visitors comprising the step of:

associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server via a Web client in communication with the Web server, comprising the following steps performed by the Web server:

storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

15. (Original): A method according to Claim 13 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

16. (Original): A method according to Claim 13 wherein the step of generating the requested Web page comprises the steps of:

retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

retrieving the content object; and

combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

17. (Original): A method according to Claim 16 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

19. (Original): A method according to Claim 13 further comprising the step of analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

20. (Previously amended): A system for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with the Web server, comprising:

means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

means for appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

21. (Original): A system according to Claim 20 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

22. (Original): A system according to Claim 20 wherein the means for generating the requested Web page comprises:

means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

means for retrieving the content object; and

means for combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

23. (Original): A system according to Claim 22 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

25. (Original): A system according to Claim 20 further comprising means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

26. (Original): A system according to Claim 20 further comprising means for appending the stored record of the user request with a time stamp for a subsequent user request for a Web page.

27. (Original): A system according to Claim 26 further comprising means for determining a length of time the user views the generated Web page using time stamps within the stored record.

28. (Previously amended): A system for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with the Web server, comprising:

means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes first and second content objects having respective unique first and second identifiers associated therewith, wherein the unique first and second identifiers are generated via a hashing function, comprising:

means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

means for retrieving the first and second content objects; and

means for combining the first and second content objects and the layout template to produce the requested Web page;

means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

means for appending the stored record of the user request with the first and second unique identifiers associated with the first and second content objects included within the generated Web page.

29. (Original): A system according to Claim 28 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

30. (Original): A system according to Claim 28 wherein the first and second content objects are selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

31. (Original): A system according to Claim 28 further comprising means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

32. (Previously amended): A system for collecting information about the preferences of Web site visitors comprising:

means for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server via a Web client in communication with the Web server, comprising:

means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

means for appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

34. (Original): A system according to Claim 32 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

35. (Original): A system according to Claim 32 wherein the means for generating the requested Web page comprises:

means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

means for retrieving the content object; and

means for combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

36. (Original): A system according to Claim 35 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

38. (Original): A system according to Claim 32 further comprising means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

39. (Previously amended): A computer program product for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with the Web server, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

computer readable program code means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

computer readable program code means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

computer readable program code means for appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

40. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 39 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

41. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 39 wherein the computer readable program code means for generating the requested Web page comprises:

computer readable program code means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

computer readable program code means for retrieving the content object; and

computer readable program code means for combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

42. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 41 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

44. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 39 further comprising computer readable program code means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

45. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 39 further comprising computer readable program code means for appending the stored record of the user request with a time stamp for a subsequent user request for a Web page

46. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 45 further comprising computer readable program code means for determining a length of time the user views the generated Web page using time stamps within the stored record.

47. (Previously amended): A computer program product for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server, wherein the user makes the Web page request via a Web client in communication with

the Web server, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

computer readable program code means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes first and second content objects having respective unique first and second identifiers associated therewith, wherein the unique first and second identifiers are generated via a hashing function, comprising:

computer readable program code means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

computer readable program code means for retrieving the first and second content objects; and

computer readable program code means for combining the first and second content objects and the layout template to produce the requested Web page;

computer readable program code means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

computer readable program code means for appending the stored record of the user request with the unique first and second identifiers associated with the first and second content objects included within the generated Web page.

48. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 47 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

49. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 47 wherein the first and second content objects are selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

50. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 47 further comprising computer readable program code means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.

51. (Previously amended): A computer program product for collecting information about the preferences of Web site visitors, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for associating dynamically generated Web page content with a user who requests a Web page from a Web server via a Web client in communication with the Web server, comprising:

computer readable program code means for storing a record of the user request within a Web server log;

computer readable program code means for generating the requested Web page, wherein the generated Web page includes a content object having a unique identifier associated therewith, wherein the unique identifier is generated via a hashing function;

computer readable program code means for serving the generated Web page to the Web client; and

computer readable program code means for appending the stored record of the user request with the unique identifier associated with the content object included within the generated Web page.

53. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 51 wherein the record of the request includes information that identifies the user.

54. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 51 wherein the computer readable program code means for generating the requested Web page comprises:

computer readable program code means for retrieving a layout template for the requested Web page, wherein the layout template defines how content objects are displayed within the requested Web page;

computer readable program code means for retrieving the content object; and

computer readable program code means for combining the content object and the layout template to produce the requested Web page.

55. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 54 wherein the content object is selected from the group consisting of text files, audio files, video files, image files, and hyperlinks.

57. (Original): A computer program product according to Claim 51 further comprising computer readable program code means for analyzing a plurality of stored user request records to determine Web content preferences of a user.